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NATURAL HISTORY OF PLUMMERS ISLAND, MARYLAND[1]

XII. A Biological Note on *Trypoxylon richardsi* Sandhouse

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Trypoxylon (*Trypoxylon*) *richardsi* Sandh. is one of our uncommon eastern wasps and the only described member of the Rufidens Group in the United States except for the even rarer *T. bridwelli* Sandh. from Brownsville, Texas. On September 6, 1958, I found a 2-celled nest (9658 A) in a boring in soft pith of a dead twig of the fringe tree, *Chionanthus virginica,* at Plummers Island, Maryland.

The dead twig containing the nest was 12 mm. in diameter. The nest was in a boring which measured 37 mm. in length and 1.9 mm. in diameter. There was a thin clay partition at the bottom of the boring and then two cells 10 mm. long, each closed by a clay partition ½ mm. in thickness. The boring was empty above these cells. On September 6 the bottom cell held a cocoon containing a wasp prepupa. The cocoon was 7.5 mm. long and 1.5 mm. in diameter, spun of light cream-colored silk, subopaque, and very similar in appearance and texture to that of *Trypoxylon* (*T.*) *frigidum* Sm. The other cell held a number of very small, dead, immature spiders, the prey stored by the wasp. The nest was kept outdoors from October, 1958, through March, 1959, and then

[1]The following numbers of this series have been published previously: I (Introduction), Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash. 48:115-117. 1935; II (Flowering plants and ferns), op. cit. 118-134; III (Mosses), op. cit. 135-137; IV (Birds), op. cit. 159-167; V (Fungi), op. cit. 49:123-131. 1936; VI (Reptiles and amphibians), op. cit. 50:137-139. 1937; VII (Hepaticae), 52:21-22. 1939; VII (Lichens), op. cit. 23-26; IX (Mammals), op. cit. 131-134; X (Flowering plants and ferns, Supplement 1), op. cit. 66:31-38. 1953; XI (Blue-green algae), op. cit. 67:239-241. 1954.

was brought into my office. A female of *richardsi* emerged from the cocoon on April 29.

Scanty data on specimens of the Rufidens Group in the U. S. National Museum suggest that its members usually utilize abandoned borings of other insects or other cavities in twigs or stems as nesting sites. A male of *richardsi* was reared June, 1883, by T. Pergande from a twig gall on oak from "Va.". An undescribed species from Florida was reared from Rhodes grass infested with scale insects, presumably from nests in the stems. A female of *rufidens* Cam. was reared September 19, 1935, from a stem of *Vanda* sp. (a cultivated orchid) at Balboa, C. Z., Panama. *T. richardsi* has never utilized wooden traps at Plummers Island, but perhaps the smallest boring I use (3.2 mm. diameter) is too large to at tract this small wasp.